



**Gambling Business Group Meeting Held  
on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2019 at 11.00am.**

**Venue; Ince & Co, Aldgate Tower 2, Leman Street, London.**

In attendance:-

|                    |   |                       |
|--------------------|---|-----------------------|
| Nick Harding       | - | Chair                 |
| Peter Hannibal     | - | CEO                   |
| Andrew Cotton      | - | Ince & Co.            |
| Graham Roberts     | - | Inspired              |
| Simon Reynolds     | - | Ladbrokes             |
| Wayne Forster      | - | MOTO                  |
| Amanda Kiernan     | - | Praesepe              |
| Andy Bullock       | - | Innovative technology |
| Susanna Fitzgerald |   |                       |

1. **Welcome and Introductions** Nick welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Andrew Cotton for organising the impressive meeting facilities. Apologies were noted. It was noted that the GBG meeting at time clashes with other industry meetings. Action; Amanda and Amanda to liaise to try to avoid future diary conflicts.
2. **Previous Meeting Notes and Actions**
  - a. Point 6. Gambling Commission is still maintaining a 'stand-off' relationship with the Industry. Members noted that Helen Venn and Oliver Sweeney are far more interactive than the more senior members of the Organisation. Suggest an approach via Helen with the Gamble Feature matter. New Chair of the revised RGSB has asked if she can meet with NH. The general view was that the Commission should be challenged regarding their poor liaison strategy.
  - b. Other matters are brought forward to this meeting.
3. **Gaming Machines Gamble Feature correspondence from the Gambling Commission** (attached to the agenda for reference); The debate around this

matter is all the more splintered because gamble features (as they are designed) are compliant with the Gambling Act. However, there appears to be a concern from the Gambling Commission about iterations of the Roulette game appearing with gambles above £50. Some members believe that if the issue is with Roulette then the GC should say so, however the feedback is that developers would simply find an alternative method to deliver a similar product, which is unhelpful. The consensus of the meeting is that the current wording is far too woolly and ambiguous. The whole matter needs looking at from a different angle. The meeting asked PH to write back and ask for a 'face to face' meeting where things can be explained better, and the GC's concerns perhaps better articulated. Action; Peter

4. **Latest Industry Statistics;** The meeting discussed a number of concerns and trends with the latest numbers although acknowledged that they relate to the height of the negativity with B2 machines and pre the stake change. Things to note;
  - a. Pub Cat C ANBs are up since the reduction in B2 stakes.
  - b. The 40% decline in B2 revenue is not 'materially' appearing elsewhere, although there are some positive signs OTC and in AGCs.
  - c. The trend of decline in off-line revenues continues. It was noted that for many smaller Licence Holders compliance has become too expensive and unsustainable, leaving the larger operators to capitalise. Unfortunately, this case cannot be argued without being accused of the wrong sort of compromise.
5. **Gambling Expert Group GBG Input.** A meeting with interested members has been set up for June 20<sup>th</sup> with the intention of identifying regulatory issues for taking to the Gambling Expert Group to address. The listed subject areas in the agenda are discussion areas for the meeting in order to prompt experiences. It was pointed out that over recent months the number of LA inspection into LBOs has reduced dramatically. These days there are very few, and potentially even less expected with the demise of B2 games. An additional concern was raised with regard to LA fee charging, where not only are they required to show that their charges are justified (by demonstrating the costs incurred) but those costs include enforcement visits, which are clearly reducing. A third matter that

was raised is that Social Responsibility with the provision of machines in Pubs is not improving fast enough to deter negative action by the government.

However, whilst it has been discussed previously this is not a matter for the Expert Group to resolve.

- 6. The emergence of a Fraud and Crime Facebook Page.** This recent social media activity has proven to be a popular introduction; however it is fraught with issues at odds with the GDPR 2018. The GBG has gone into the Trade Press voicing its concerns suggesting that operators are very careful they do not inadvertently leave themselves exposed to prosecution (GDPR breaches can carry x20 turnover penalties). This then lead on to a discussion around the use of technology to combat crime. MSAs are currently installing a number of AGC entry barriers that have age estimation software to prevent under 25s entering with a check. ITL to consider showing GBG members their latest facial recognition and age estimation developments at a future meeting.
- 7. Industry Challenges.** The meeting discussed the lack of a robust Industry response to issues against the backdrop of declining non-remote GGY and reducing venue numbers in the latest GC statistics. The question was posed whether members want the GBG to challenge those being unfairly negative about the industry, and those who are 'milking the RG gravy train'. Issues such as the request for a 5 x fold increase in RET funding when the impact of the B2 stake reduction from £100 to £2 has yet to be evaluated. There appears to be a failure to truly recognise the need to help the vulnerable to stay in control of their gambling as a prevention measure, in favour of chasing a Public Health agenda. After this discussion it was agreed that GBG members should be written o asking if this is a strategy that they would like the organisation to take. Action; PH to draft a document.
- 8. RET Contributions.** The meeting also discussed the changing landscape with regard to voluntary contributions made to RET. More and more operators are questioning their past practice of automatically handing their entire donations to GambleAware. Again, the good work being done by YGAM was acknowledged by the meeting and that the GBG should work even closer with them on a number of mutually beneficial matters. Action; PH to explore options.

Also, it was suggested that we share the GambleAware recent funding correspondence with Lee Willows.

**9. AOB;**

- a. A matter was raised regarding a recent Gambling Commission decision 'minded to review' in an unjustified situation. Action; PH and A C to pick up separately and decide how to deal with it
- b. Date of next meeting; Conference call on 17<sup>th</sup> July is now too close to this meeting date and NH suggested we default to the September date. Action – Amanda to amend the invitations accordingly.